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SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS: BALKENENDE IV CABINET SWORN IN

REF: A. THE HAGUE 282

1B. POLITICS IN THE NETHERLANDS - FEBRUARY 14

11. The cabinet of the new center-left Dutch coalition government of Christian Democrats (CDA), Social Democrats (PvdA), and Christian Union (CU) was sworn in by Queen Beatrix on February 22. CDA leader Jan Peter Balkenende remains Prime Minister; this is the fourth government led by Balkenende. PvdA leader Wouter Bos and CU leader Andre Rouvoet are now deputy Prime Ministers as Minister of Finance and Minister for Youth and Family Affairs, respectively. The new coalition was formed 91 days following the general elections in November, which is slightly longer than average (72 days since WWII). The first official cabinet meeting will take place on February 23, while Parliament will discuss the new cabinet's government statement on March 1. For more biographic information on the ministers, please see refs.

12. Of the 16 ministers and 11 state-secretary positions, CDA received eight minister and four state-secretary appointments. PvdA garnered six minister and five state-secretary positions, while CU has two minister and one state-secretary slots. There are five women ministers and six women state-secretaries. For the first time, two Muslims have been appointed to the Cabinet, with Ahmed Aboutaleb and Nebahat Albayrak from PvdA assuming state-secretary positions.

Ministers

13. The 16 new Dutch ministers are:

Jan Peter Balkenende (CDA) - Prime Minister
Wouter Bos (PvdA) - Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance
Andre Rouvoet (CU) - Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Youth and Family Affairs
Maxime Verhagen (CDA) - Foreign Minister
Bert Koenders (PvdA) - Development Minister
Ernst Hirsch Ballin (CDA) - Justice Minister
Guusje ter Horst (PvdA) - Minister of Home Affairs
Ronald Plasterk (PvdA) Minister of Education, Culture, and Science
Eimert van Middelkoop (CU) - Minister of Defense
Jacqueline Cramer (PvdA) - Minister of Environment
Ella Vogelaar (PvdA) - Minister of Integration and Urban Renewal
Camiel Eurlings (CDA) - Minister of Transport, public Works and Water Management
Maria van der Hoeven (CDA) - Minister of Economic Affairs

Gerda Verburg (CDA) - Minister of Agriculture, Nature, and
Food Quality
Piet Hein Donner (CDA) - Minister of Social Affairs and
Employment
Ab Klink (CDA) - Minister of Health, Welfare and Sports

Deputy Ministers (State-Secretaries)

¶4. Per refs, there has been one change regarding the
State-Secretary postings: Tineke Huizinga-Heringa from the
Christian Union replaces her party colleague Benne van Popta.

The 11 new Deputy Ministers/State-Secretaries are:

Ahmed Aboutaleb (PvdA) - State-Secretary for Social Affairs
Sharon Dijksma (PvdA) - State-Secretary for Education
Frans Timmermans (PvdA) - State-Secretary for European Affairs
Nebahat Albayrak (PvdA) - State-Secretary of Justice
Jet Bussemaker (PvdA) - State-Secretary of Health
Frans Heemskerk (PvdA) - State-Secretary of Foreign Trade
Marja van Bijsterveldt (CDA) - State-Secretary of Education
Jan Kees de Jager (CDA) - State-Secretary of Education
Cees van der Knaap (CDA) - State-Secretary of Defense
Ank Bijleveld (CDA) - State-Secretary of Home Affairs
Tineke Huizinga-Heringa (CU) - State-Secretary of Transport

BLAKEMAN